

# YOUR PRACTICE'S FACEBOOK PAGE –

## 7 STEPS TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

BY KRISTIE NATION

You have probably already accepted the fact that social media, Facebook in particular, is important to your practice. But social media is not simply about signing up and using online platforms (although this is a mandatory first step). Rather, it is about learning the ins and outs of each platform so you can leverage social media to its maximum potential.

*(If you have not started a Facebook campaign yet, you need to begin so you can gain “likes” and post content immediately. If you already have a solid Facebook page and fan base, read on.)*

Even if you're doing everything right, the reach of your Facebook page may not be as large as you think. For example, if you have 400 fans of your page, this does not mean your posts show up on every one of their newsfeeds. In fact, Facebook says most business pages only reach approximately 16% of their fans with any given post!

Recently, Facebook implemented something called “EdgeRank,” an algorithm that determines how important your posts are to each of the individuals who “like” your page. EdgeRank looks at three factors:

- 1. Affinity.** The individuals who interact with your page regularly will see more of your posts than people who “like” your page and never visit again. *(Tip: almost 51% of Facebook users admit they often “like” pages to obtain a special offer or discount, then never go back. This makes getting people to interact repeatedly with your page a priority.)*
- 2. Weight.** Your posts are valued by how rich they are. Polls and images are worth more than text, and comments are worth more than “likes.” So work on creating complex, interactive-ready posts.
- 3. Time decay.** Posts you put up are more likely to appear in the newsfeeds of people who are active at that time, not someone logging in three to four hours later.

Facebook is using EdgeRank to ensure that people's newsfeeds are not so cluttered that they miss the stuff they're most interested in (a common problem on Twitter.) Here are seven things you can do to expand your reach:

- 1. Find out what your EdgeRank is** so you can track your improvement. You can use this evaluator to find out where your practice's page stands: <http://edgerankchecker.com/>.

- 2. Post at the right time.** Traffic is highest midweek between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., during lunch break. Posting your best weekday content at noon instead of at the start of the workday means it will be seen by more people.

- 3. Scheduling posts is OK,** but use Facebook's scheduling tool instead of a third-party app such as HootSuite. Manual posts get three to four times the number of posts than third-party posts. Check out this video that explains how to schedule posts on Facebook: <http://youtu.be/ntPAru3Jipk>.

- 4. Choose your daily content carefully.** Engagement – which is how many people interact with your content – is 18% higher on Thursdays and Fridays. Save your most interactive posts (polls, surveys, etc.) for the end of the week.

- Worry more about **how many fans you reach** than about how many fans you **have**. It's a proven fact that smaller brands reach more of their total number of fans on any given day.

- 6. Use photos in as many of your posts as possible.** Photos get up to 20 times as much engagement as other types of posts, plus Facebook shows photos to people who browse photos. This could improve your overall views.

- Use “fill-in-the-blank” posts to get fans involved and sharing information about themselves. **“I like my dentist because ...”** would be a great place to start.

Improving how you post to your page will increase the amount of interaction you get. Facebook will reward you by increasing your EdgeRank and showing your posts to more fans. This means more visibility for your practice. **DE**

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